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Vidhyarthi and Vishayarthi

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2. Vidhyarthi and Vishayarthi

No object in the world can be without a creator. Here is a loud- speaker. It has the power to broadcast sound. Someone must have produced it. Who could have created it? Only somebody who had the knowledge and skill to produce such a contrivance. He may not be visible to you, but somewhere the person who produced it must exist. The person who produced your watch might exist in Germany or Switzerland or Japan. He is not visible to you but without such a person the watch could not have come into existence. For everything which man enjoys in daily life there is a creator. But we are also seeing objects which are beyond human capacity. The stars which twinkle in the sky demonstrate their existence. The glory of the Sun and the Moon which illumine the world is also visible to us. These are not human creations. Have they come into existence by themselves or is there someone who is not visible to us? What kind of person could be the creator of these super objects? Can any ordinary person create the stars or the sun and the moon? The supreme power which has the capacity to create such marvellous things has been described by the *Vedhas* as *Aprameya*, which means, one who is beyond all proofs and all limitations. He cannot be described in words. The primary object of man must be to seek to understand this Infinite Power.

It would be a total waste of this human existence if one does not make any effort to find out the nature of the Creator. To recognise the Creator, there are certain criteria. There are three types of evidence determining the existence of a thing. The first is *prathyaksha* (direct perception), the second is *anumaana* (inference), the third is *sabdha* (the authority of revealed scriptures).

Determining the existence of *Brahman*

We generally consider direct perception as the most important type of evidence. We are able to see our body. We are able to see how many hands we have, how many legs we have, how many eyes, and so on. That is not all. We boil milk and add some curd to it at night and the next morning find that the milk has turned into curd. For the conversion of milk to curd, our own action provides the direct proof. The evidence of our own eyes is enough to convince us about how the change from milk to curd has occurred. We do not need anyone else's authority for that. But our mind is not visible. We cannot understand what is meant by *Aathma*. We believe in the existence of the *Aathma* on the strength of the statements made by the great sages who have had the experience and who have conveyed the teaching.

Anumaana or inference is another form of proof. We see smoke on the top of a distant hill. We infer from the smoke that there must be a fire on the hill. Although we see only the smoke, we infer that there is fire. To infer the existence of the "unseen" from the presence of what is "seen" is *Anumaana Pramaana* (inferential proof).

To take another instance: If a person who has gone to Kaashi gives us a description of the place, those who may have seen the place would be able to appreciate or agree with the account given by the visitor, but those who have not been to the place can only appreciate the verbal description but cannot have the experience of direct perception.

But these methods of determining facts are applicable only to the external universe. For determining, however, the Divine Principle-we must depend only on the *Sabdha Pramaana* of the *Vedhas*. When the Divine is described as without attributes, eternal, ever-existing, pure, free, and self-effulgent, this description will not make the *Brahman* visible to us. It is only when the state of *Brahman* is realised by us that its existence becomes valid.

Seek that which is unchanging.

All subjects in the universe have three characteristics, which are derived from the Divine. These are *asthi*, *bhaathi* and *priyam*. These qualities are also otherwise represented by the terms *sath*, *chith* and *aanandha*---Being, Awareness and Bliss. The existence of an object is derived from *asthi*. What it is, is known from *bhaathi*, that is, from how it appears to our eyes. That it is a useful or enjoyable object is derived from the quality of *priyam*. While these three are fundamental qualities, the forms and names may change. For instance, a silver plate is capable of being, converted to some other article. Silver is fundamental and the value of the article, is dependent not on the form or the name but on the silver in the article.

While man can change the forms and names of objects, he cannot create the basic materials out of which the various objects are made. Equally the scientist makes use of materials available from nature for conversion to various uses but the primary material itself is not created by him. Man must seek that which is unchanging. What exactly is the underlying cause of all the conflicts and confusions that affect the world today?

The institutions imparting learning have succeeded in equipping man with fantastic skills. Look at the field of atomic engineering or space exploration and conquest. Man has achieved astounding feats. But in actual daily life, these feats, have not resulted in peace, happiness and harmony. Castes, races and classes clash with each other with unrelenting hate. Even students and the youth have taken to this dangerous course. The situation is fast becoming beyond control.

Education has not done its duty to the youth

The number of students in schools and colleges is sky rocketing. We proclaim that formal education, which was for long the privilege, of a few scholars and the sons of the rich, is now provided at the very doors of everyone. We rejoice when schools and colleges rise up more and more in every country of the world, without realising that what is happening through them is 'the worsening of the sickness of the community. Unrest, fear and anxiety are increasing as a result of improper and incomplete, education. Education can yield peace and prosperity only when, along with technical skills and objective information, students are equipped with moral ideals, righteous living, and spiritual insight. Now, the education process does not involve itself in these values. It works even counter to them. It is quite unwilling to emphasise *dharmaic* living. It lays no stress on morals.

As a consequence, the products of this process, who have no sense of values, gradually enter the Professions and positions of authority in the administration of nations and rise up in time to higher levels. The world has come to the brink of disaster as a result.

Bharath which shone among nations as the land of forbearance, self-control and service, is being fast converted into a land pursuing pleasure. Each one desires to loll on sofas in air-conditioned office rooms. Can this be named pleasure? Can this be the ideal for an educated person? No. This state will only breed physical and mental illness.

How can a student be regarded as a success, if at the end of the course, he knocks at the door of every office, exhibiting the diploma he has secured, and clamouring like a beggar asking for jobs? Education has conferred on him this disgraceful role. Can it claim that it has done its duty? No. The educated person must serve the people through sweat and toil. Education has to inspire youth to offer service, to sacrifice and to help. It must not inspire youth to amass money as its

goal, and to travel farther and farther to earn more and more of it. For, accumulated money breeds arrogance and arrogance brings in its train other vices.

Humility is the hall-mark of true education

Modern education is creating for the nation a deplorable malady. Originally, the British instituted a system of education in India primarily to prepare men for administrative jobs. To-day, education has been expanded and we have to create more jobs, and with greater emoluments. The result is the Government has to spend more and more on salaries and face increasing demands from public servants. There are strikes for higher wages and when wages are increased, taxes have to be increased. The result is increase in prices and increasing discontent. Prices can come down only when the people's desires are limited and the demand for goods is reduced.

Many people feel proud about the enormous expansion of education in the country. But, is there any reason for feeling pleased with this situation? An unhealthy expansion of education is as undesirable as an unhealthy bloating of the body. Acquiring degrees at great cost and developing contempt for one's parents out of intellectual pride is not a sign of proper education. Humility is the hall-mark of true education. Arrogance, envy and ostentation should have no place in a properly educated person.

Men crave for peace and happiness but they do things which can only bring unhappiness and worry. Having been born as human beings, you should try to rise above the level of animals. You are all essentially sparks from the Divine, but like sparks coming from a furnace which after a time turn into ash, you are forgetting your divine origin. While pursuing your education for worldly purposes, you should also pursue the spiritual discipline, which will lead you to the Divine. You must consider yourself extremely fortunate in studying in this institution, in which there is a spiritual atmosphere. If you adhere to Sai ideals and practise even a small fraction of Sai teachings, you will be realising the true purpose of education and the true object of human life.

Education without right conduct is of no value. You must make use of what you have learnt, not only for earning a living but for service to society. Only then will your degrees have any meaning. Whatever job you may take up, wherever you may be working, you must continue to practise spiritual discipline and aim at Self-realisation. Without a spiritual basis, education is futile. May you all lead exemplary lives, bring happiness to your parents and render help to society, and bring credit to the College where you have studied for many years.

Brindaavan, 1-3-1981